

the Elks Club of Flat Rock, Flat Rock Rotary, and Downriver youth sports. He has demonstrated his commitment to the entire Michigan community, and it is my honor and privilege to recognize his distinguished work today.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Honorable James Kersten for an exemplary career in public service. He has effectively served Woodhaven and the state of Michigan in his role as the 33rd District Judge through his selflessness and dedication to the community. I join with Judge James' family, friends, and colleagues in extending my best wishes to him in retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF PATRICK DRAGON

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 18, 2021

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of dedicated and heroic public servant, Patrick Dragon, of Brooklyn, Connecticut. Mr. Dragon passed, at only age 50, on January 2, 2021, after a courageous battle with coronavirus.

A lifelong resident of Brooklyn, Connecticut, Patrick was drawn to serve his community through public safety. Entering public service at early age, he began as an Emergency Medical Technician and then joined the 107th Training Troop of the Connecticut State Police. Upon graduation in January 1998, Patrick returned to his local community serving as a Patrol Trooper at Troop D in nearby Danielson, then as the Resident State Trooper in Sterling, and a Major Crime Unit Detective. Always wanting to do more, he also became a certified Fire Investigator/Fire Marshal with the State Police's Fire & Explosion Unit. It was through this assignment that Patrick acted as first responder to the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Connecticut.

That horrific day transformed the lives of many Americans, including Mr. Dragon's. In the years following the tragedy, he found healing through service to a new community—his peers in law enforcement through the Virginia Law Enforcement Assistance Program (VALEAP). This unique peer-led program brought together law enforcement professionals who have experienced unbelievable traumas while on duty. Patrick sincerely committed himself to this program, serving as a peer leader and mentor, working with over 250 emotionally and physically traumatized law enforcement professionals from around the country. VALEAP administrators commended Mr. Dragon for his service and have noted that his passing will leave an "immeasurable void" within the program.

Although he had overcome immeasurable challenges—Patrick's motivation for service to his community never wavered. Upon retirement from the State Police in 2018 he transitioned into a new role as an emergency dispatcher with the Foster Police Department in the neighboring State of Rhode Island. Amazingly, during that entire 34 years of police work he was also a dedicated member of the East Brooklyn Fire Department, serving most recently as deputy chief.

Mr. Dragon's loss leaves a deep void from Eastern Connecticut all the way to Virginia

and beyond. His dedication to both local community and fellow officer has made the State of Connecticut more safe and his workforce more whole.

Madam Speaker, knowing of Patrick Dragon's selfless service and how he has responded to unimaginable tragedy, it is objective to state his work represents the best of law enforcement. I hope the chamber will join me in expressing the deepest condolences on behalf of the House of Representatives to the Dragon family—his parents Robert and Ann Marie; older sister Michele Hearn and younger brother Jason Dragon. I hope this testament to Patrick's life serves as an acknowledgement of the immeasurable debt of gratitude owed to him by the American people.

IN RECOGNITION OF BEDFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONER ALAN FREDERICK

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 18, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate new Bedford County Commissioner Alan Frederick of Rainsburg, Pennsylvania on his appointment for this role, in which he is slated to serve through 2023.

Commissioner Frederick has been a resident of Bedford County since 1952. He has worked on his family farm for his entire life as a dairy and grain farmer. Commissioner Frederick also has also served on the boards of several economic and community organizations. Prior to his selection as Commissioner, he had served as a board member of the Bedford County Development Association for 11 years, including one year as chairman. He also has served as a board member for the Bedford Farm Bureau Co-Op for 10 years, including four years as president. Additionally, he served as a board member for the Pennsylvania Beef Council for six years, including one year as chairman. In recognition of this service, he received the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce's Volunteer of the Year Award in 2008.

As Commissioner Frederick begins his tenure on the Bedford County Board of Commissioners, I thank him for his willingness to serve our region and wish him the best in this endeavor.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER JEFFERSON COUNTY SHERIFF, "BOE" FONTAINE

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 18, 2021

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Former Jefferson County Sheriff Edward Lewis "Boe" Fontaine. Sheriff Fontaine passed away on Sunday, January 17 following a battle with COVID-19, leaving behind a county and Fourth District which mourns the loss of a friend, a helper, and a true servant leader.

Beginning his law enforcement career as a deputy sheriff assigned to the Uniformed Pa-

trol Division in 1980, he was later elected as the 30th Jefferson County Sheriff, serving two terms from 1999 to 2006. Appointed by then Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee in 2001, Sheriff Fontaine served as a Commissioner on the Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training (CLEST). Prior to his service at home, Sheriff Fontaine served 21 years in the United States Marine Corps, retiring as a gunnery sergeant. For his heroism in action, he became one of the most decorated Arkansan service members in history. Most notable of those awards include four Purple Hearts, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star with a combat "V."

In addition to his life of leadership in the military and in local law enforcement, Sheriff Fontaine was known as a family man and valuable member of the community, along with his wife of 60 years, Maye Winston Fontaine. Together, they raised a daughter, Kim, and worshipped as members of Bethany Missionary Baptist Church.

I take this time today to honor the life of service exemplified by Sheriff "Boe" Fontaine. I thank him and his family for their dedication to our fellow citizens and our beloved Fourth District.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AFRICAN DESCENT AFFAIRS ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 18, 2021

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution with my colleagues, Representatives GREGORY MEEKS, SHEILA JACKSON LEE, GWEN MOORE, and BOBBY RUSH to introduce the African Descent Affairs Act. As we celebrate Black History Month and continue to highlight the International Decade for People of African Descent, we have seen a sharp increase in racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination across the globe. Global racial justice movements in response to the tragic death of George Floyd have not only drawn attention to the problem, but also to opportunities to join international efforts to develop and implement global and national solutions.

To aid these efforts, I have introduced the African Descent Affairs Act to improve the situation of people of African descent around the world by establishing, within the United States State Department, a Global Office of African Descent Affairs. In addition to developing global foreign policy and assistance strategies for people of African descent, the bill would also create a "Fund" to support anti-discrimination and empowerment efforts by African descent led civil society organizations; require Annual State Department Human Rights Reports to include a section on discrimination faced by people of African descent; and create similar initiatives at the United States Agency for International Development that would work in partnership with the State Department.

U.S. foreign policy strategies such as these have improved the situation of vulnerable groups internationally and would greatly assist in responding to increasing levels of prejudice and discrimination faced by people of African descent around the globe. The State Department has already launched many successful